

Medford and MEND Joining Forces to Create Affordable-Housing Units

Thursday, June 14, 2007
Ed Moorhouse
Burlington County Times

MEDFORD — The Township Council has approved a measure to fulfill the township's latest state-mandated affordable-housing obligations.

On Tuesday, the council tapped Moorestown Ecumenical Neighborhood Development Inc. (MEND) of Moorestown to develop the homes. MEND is a nonprofit, faith-based developer of affordable housing.

Under a new formula established by the state Council on Affordable Housing (COAH), a municipality generally must build one affordable-housing unit for every eight market-value units built, and one affordable unit for every 25 jobs created. Medford must create the opportunity for 36 units.

COAH issues rounds of affordable-housing obligation numbers for each of the state's municipalities about every 10 years on average.

MEND Executive Director Matthew Reilly said yesterday the nonprofit plans to build 36 rental units for senior citizens in one development on 3.6 acres off Jones Road behind the township Public Safety Building.

Reilly said at least five of the units would have barrier-free access for disabled persons.

"I wanted to convey on behalf of our organization how thrilled we are to have the opportunity to work with Medford Township on this project," Reilly told the council Tuesday. "Your senior citizens and disabled residents will benefit greatly from this project. We pride ourselves on working very closely with all of our municipal partners on this great project that we can all be proud of."

Mayor Scott Rudder said the council was pleased to have MEND on board with the project.

The new project would be located near the roughly 245-year-old Singer house at Union Street and Jones Road. Mount Holly-based nonprofit Salt & Light Company Inc., a property development and management company, is now overseeing the rehabilitation of the Singer house for affordable apartments.

MEND has been building and managing affordable housing in Burlington County for seniors, the disabled and low- and moderate-income individuals and families since 1969, when it was founded by nine Moorestown churches.